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CENTRAL and NORTHERN B.C.

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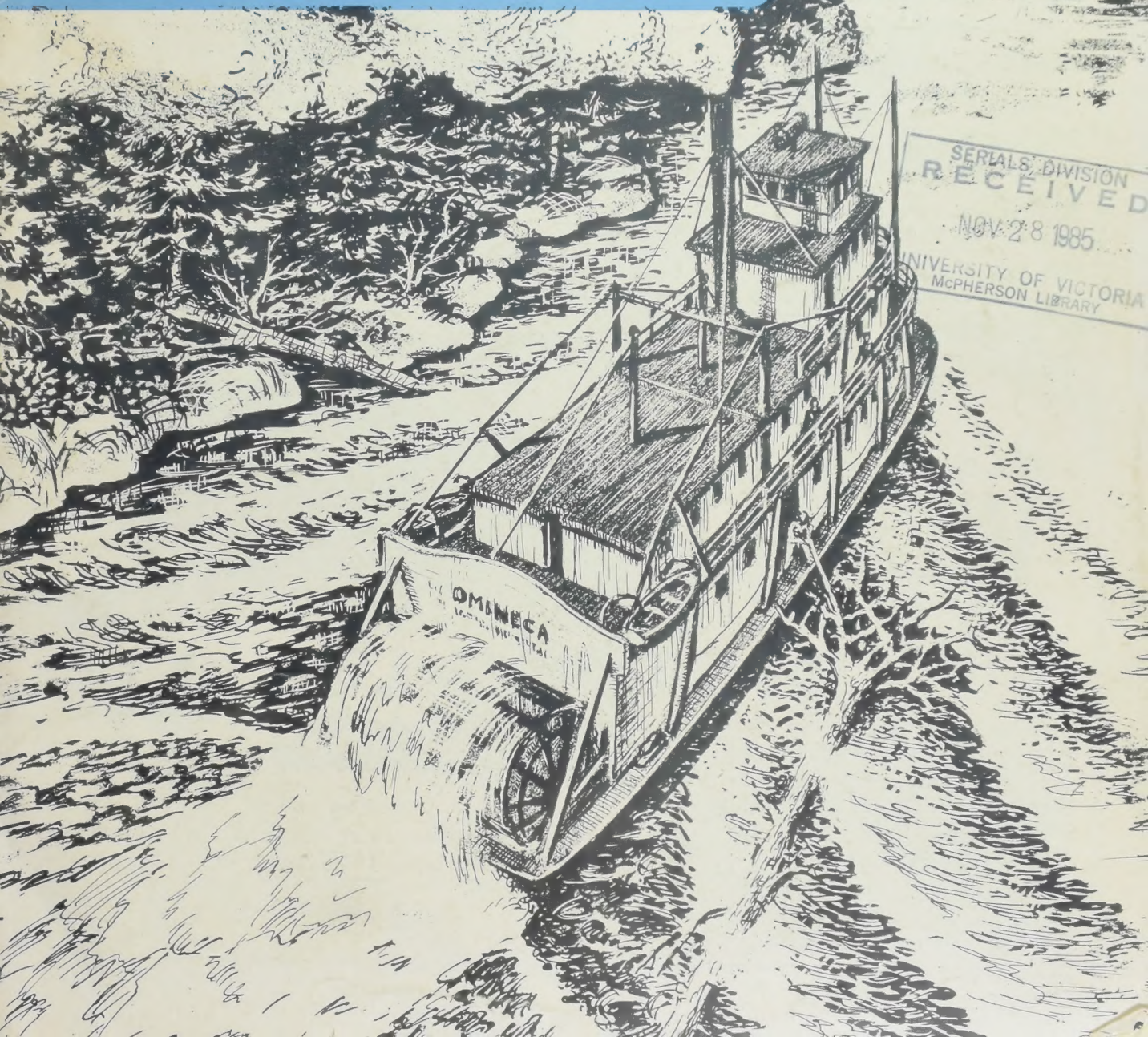

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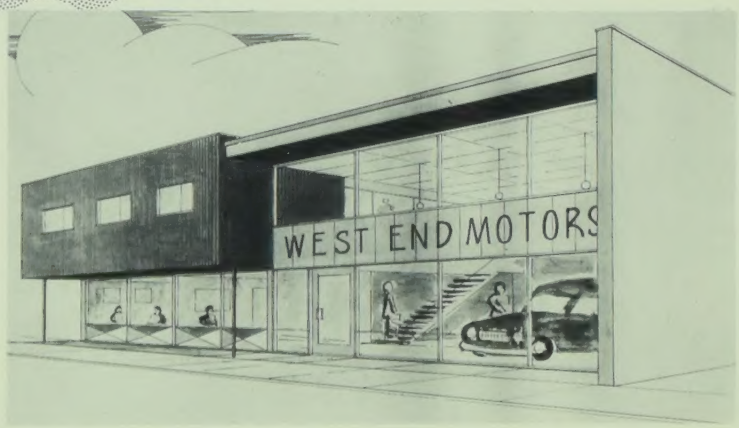

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Prince George

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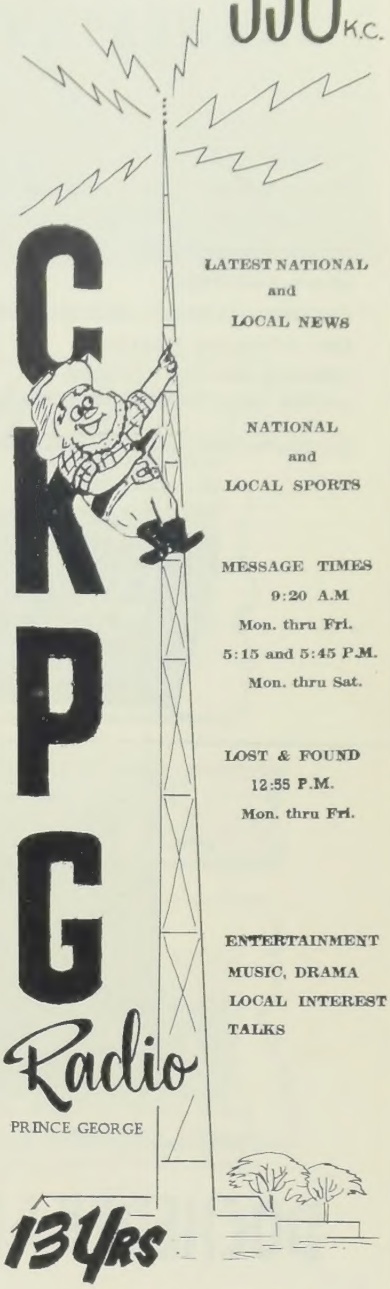
The Cover

A once familiar picture to old timers on the Skeena River--a sternwheeler near Kitselas Canyon. This was a particularly viscous stretch and several boats came to grief here.

Dial 550 K.C.



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THE VOICE OF CENTRAL British Columbia

Letters

Editor,
Northwest Digest,

You might be interested to know that thanks to the efforts of Dr. R.G. Large, Chairman of the Prince Rupert Centennial Committee and President of the Museum of Northern British Columbia, one of the Centennial projects for this sea-port town has been the construction of a much-needed modern building to house the exceptional collection of native artifacts and historical items that comprise the Museum of Northern British Columbia.

The old museum building was built around 1909 to house the Government offices and bore the wear of countless footsteps until the completion of the present Court House in 1933. Following the removal of the governmental staff to their new quarters, the old building was then turned over for use as a public library and had, on its second floor, a modest collection of historical miscellany. This marked the beginning of what was to become one of the foremost museums north of Vancouver.

However, this building soon proved unsuitable since it offered little security against loss of exhibits by fire and this, in turn, caused owners of many rare pieces of native art to be reluctant to loan their private collections for display. In addition to the ever-present risk of fire though, the museum building was found to be increasingly inadequate for the effective display of the numerous articles on hand. However the new building will remedy this. It is about eighty feet long by forty feet wide and the roof design is such that the exhibition floor will be unobstructed by supporting posts thus permitting maximum use of floor space. Provision has been made for a small office for the Sec-

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retary-curator, Mrs. Jocelyn Bolton, who has done such a creditable job in the present building, and another separate room will be used for the Archives section.

While the architects' plans did not specifically intend that the new museum's lines should follow those of the early Haida lodges, the final effect when the totem poles are raised will, in the writer's opinion, produce an extremely harmonious native appearance.

The poles to be raised at the new site, on the Court House grounds at the corner of 1st Avenue and McBride Street, include those at present fronting the old museum. These are Haida poles from the old village of Yan which was situated on Masset Inlet, directly across from the present day settlement of Masset, Queen Charlotte Islands. It might be of interest to describe one of these, the "Leaf-and-Flower" Pole, standing at the right hand corner of the old building. The pole, twenty-five feet tall, contains in vertical progression from the bottom: two grizzly bears sitting erect, one on top of the other, two stems with leaves and flowers in low relief rising in vine-like fashion to the carved eagle which tops the pole.

This pole belonged to Chief Gayaw of Yan whose family journeyed several times to Victoria by dug-out canoe, in the carving of which the Haida excelled (some canoes being seventy feet long and carved from a single cedar tree), and acquired a considerable fortune in the sea-otter trade. They much admired the flowers in the gardens of the "Whitemans" town, and on their return to their native village, were the first to adopt them as a family emblem and have them carved on their totem pole.

In addition to the Haida Poles a third pole will be raised which will revive memories of the C. N. R. park in Prince Rupert when it was the "Totem center" of this city. This pole will be a reproduction of the famous "Wolf" totem pole of Gitlakdamix on the upper Nass River, which was brought from that settlement during the 1920's and was an outstanding attraction of the park for many years until the ravages of time dictated its removal. The city of Prince Rupert Parks Board commissioned Mr. Charles Dudoward, the well-known carver at Port Simpson, to make a reproduction of the pole; the cedar required for the tree being donated by the Columbia Cellulose Company Limited.

Under the continuing supervision of Mrs. Bolton the museum opened in August at a ceremony that marked one of the high points of Prince Rupert's Centennial Week.

J. F. Munro,
Prince Rupert, B. C.

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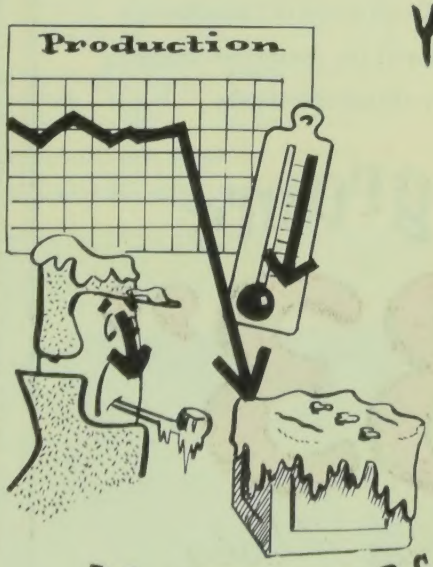

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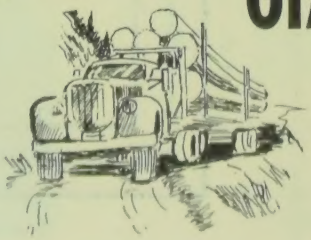

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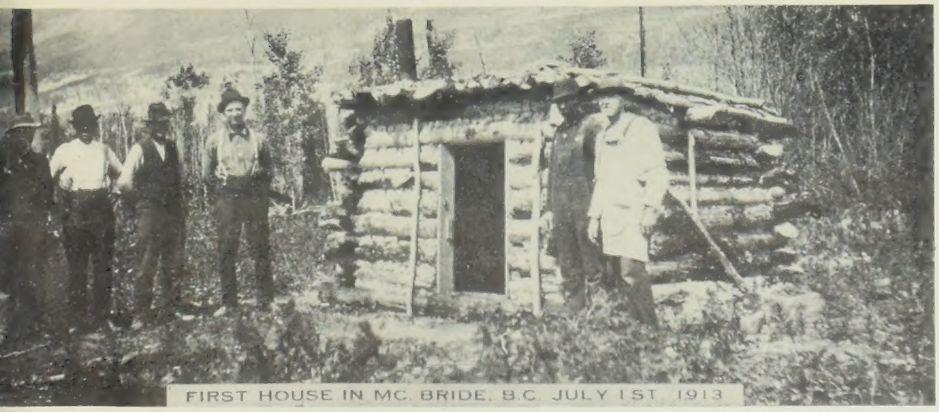
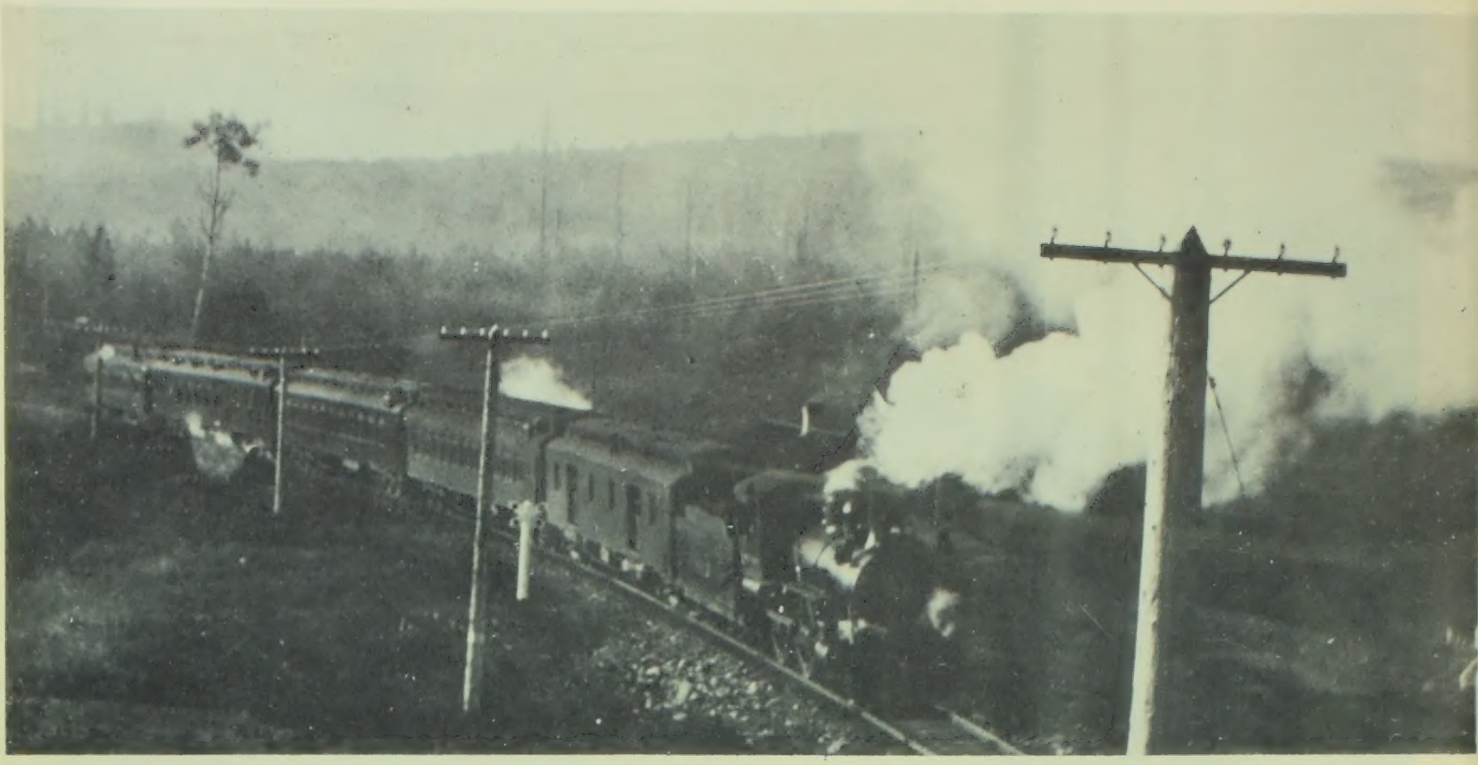
Tete Jaune School in 1917. An old construction tent, a tin heater, simplest of books, a humble contrast compared with the elaborate institutions of learning which have appeared all over the Province in just two succeeding generations.

CENTRAL AND EASTERN BRITISH COLUMBIA -- PRINCE GEORGE -- McBRIDE



A young Province, a rich Province, everywhere close to the frontier and to history. This Centennial year is bringing to her citizens an awareness of a rich and colorful heritage.
Photo courtesy Mr. Waller

Continued on Page 28



The first train through from the east over the Grand Trunk Pacific railway on September 3rd, 1914. Later the railway encountered financial difficulties and was taken over by the Government and today is part of the C.N.R. system. The photo was taken near Telkwa
In the photo below a happy Board of Trade group from Smithers and the aircraft which started a scheduled service between points westward from Prince George to Terrace.

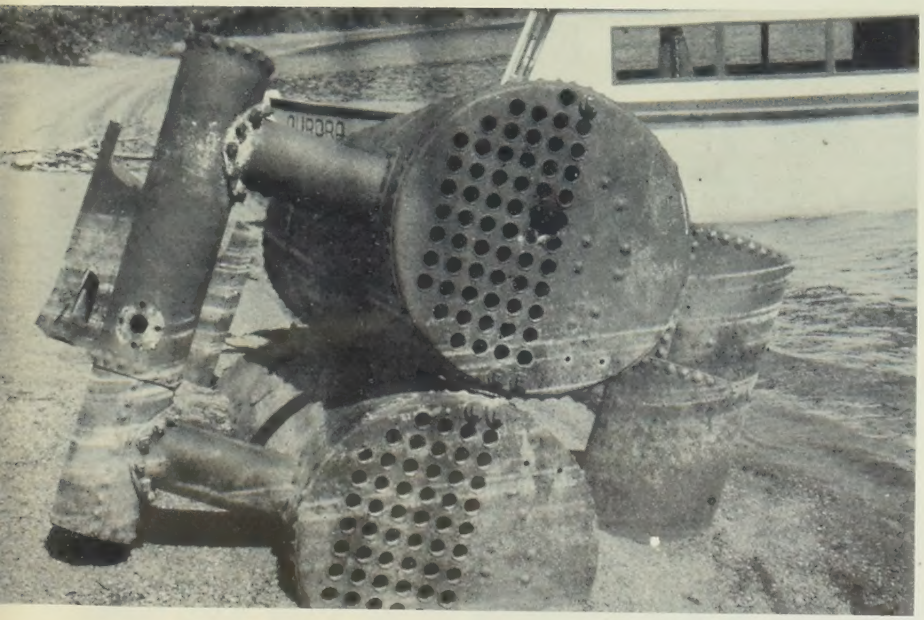
Wally West photo

THE BULKLEY AND THE COMMUNITIES OF SMITHERS, TELKWA, AND HOUSTON

Continued on Page 18

The Lakes District Of Which The Main Centres Are: Burns Lake Vanderhoof Fort St. James

Pioneers of Vanderhoof and District are honored during the Frontier nights celebration held annually in the Central B.C. community. W. West photo



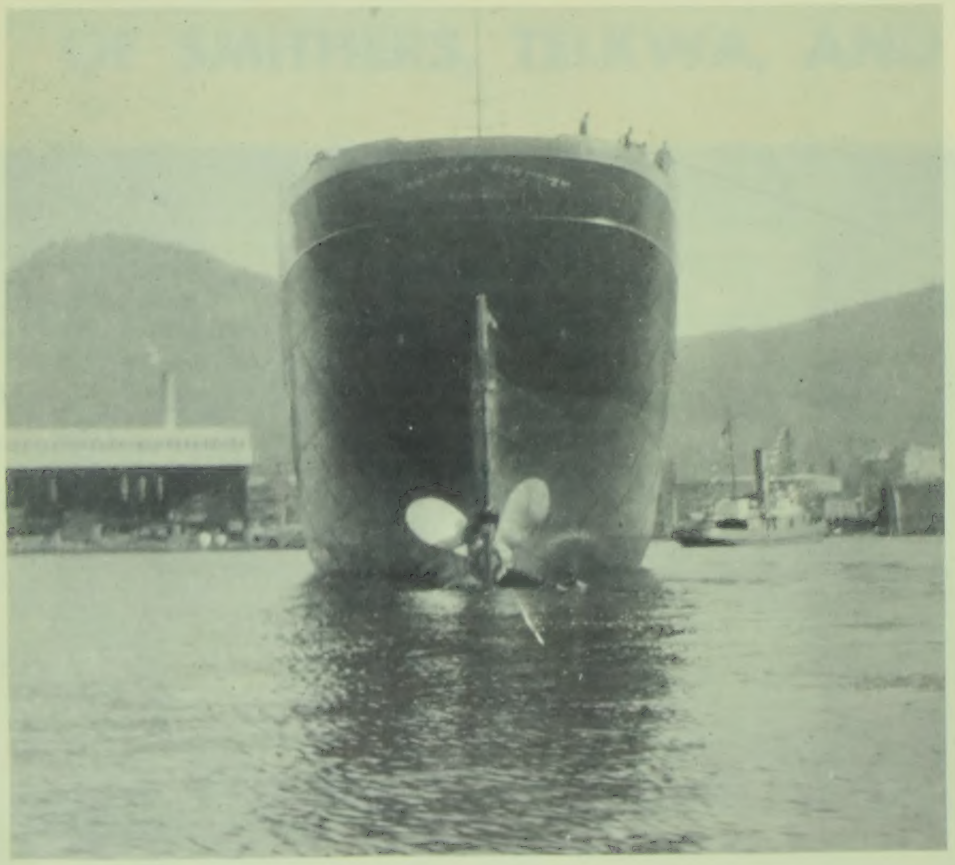
Boilers of the sternwheel steamer "S.S. Enterprise" on the west end of Trembleur Lake. She was built at Soda Creek in 1863 and for eight years plied between Soda Creek and Quesnel. Then in 1871 gold was discovered in the Omineca and the 110 foot vessel left for the north. She fought here way up the Fraser, being literally pulled through some of the Canyons by her crew, up the Nechako, the Stuart, into Stuart lake, then somehow up the turbulent Tachie river and the chain of lakes and rivers leading to Takla lake. She was apparantly used very little and left to rot on the shore of Trembleur lake, where the boiler and other ironware may still be seen.

Continued on Page 23

King Edward High School picnic on Digby Island at Prince Rupert in 1922. John W. Sutherland photo

THE SKEENA AREA --

Prince Rupert
Terrace
The Hazeltons



Prince Rupert has one of the world's best natural harbors and was originally intended to be a major Canadian seaport and main gateway to the Orient. Unfortunately these plans never materialized. However the city did prove itself as a shipbuilding center. The "Canadian Scottish" shown at left was launched in 1921. During the Second World War a large number of warships and freighters were built in the local shipyard.

John W. Sutherland photo

A pair of wheelbarrows were the assets of the first Transfer Company started in Prince Rupert. The men are Jim Bacon and Sam Holland. Mr. Bacon later started a fish smoking business which was very successful.

Above--Prince Rupert in 1907 or early in 1908 and below is the city's first fire engine which appeared in 1911.

Photo courtesy W. W. Wrathall

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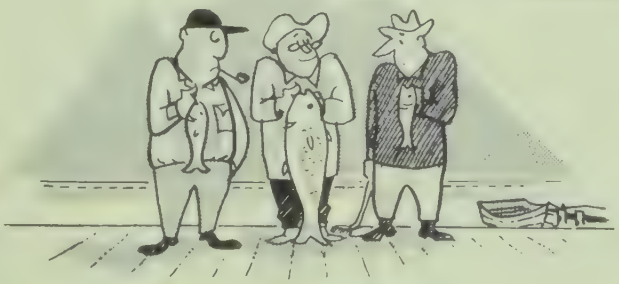

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A lineman on the telegraph that connected Dawson City in the Yukon with the outside world via the Cariboo, Central, and Northern B.C. The photo was taken in Terrace during the 1920's and the site is now the location of the Skeena Hotel. The lineman is Walter Warner who still lives in Terrace. Left--Ceremonies marking the opening of the first road between Terrace and Prince Rupert, September 4th, 1944.

The "Inlander", built by a group of Skeena river businessmen and the last sternwheeler on the river.
W.W. Wrathall photo

The four sternwheelers above transported thousands of passengers and tons of freight up the Skeena River from tidewater to Hazelton for the construction company of Foley, Welsh, and Stewart during the building of the western section of the Grand Trunk Pacific railway prior to World War One.
Provincial Archives photo

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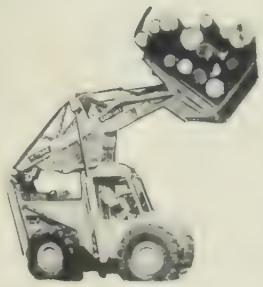

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Hazelton as it looked in 1911. Note the sternwheel steamer in the right foreground. The community was born in 1866 when the area became the jumping off point for men and material during construction of the overland telegraph between North America and Europe. During the Klondike gold rush thousands of gold seekers left the Skeena here to journey through hundreds of wilderness miles to the Yukon. The Grand Trunk Pacific railway by-passed the community and it has changed little in the past forty years. New Hazelton, shown below about 1912, was born during the railway era and it became the main supply point for the district.

Photos courtesy W.W. Wrathall

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For a century from the days of the Fur Brigades to the first World War horse and mule pack trains were a vital part of life throughout Interior B.C. In fact until the development of the helicopter just a few years ago pack trains were still extensively used. The upper photo by W. W. Wrathall shows a pack train about to leave Hazelton in 1911, and the photo above shows a mule which lost its balance but did no harm to itself or its cargo. Below is Cataline, most famous of all Interior packers. The photo was taken at Hazelton and clearly shows the long hair which Cataline kept nourished with strong rum. His recipe was to drink part of a glass and pour the rest on his hair. Photo courtesy L. Dickinson

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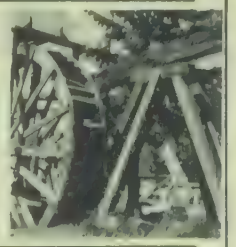

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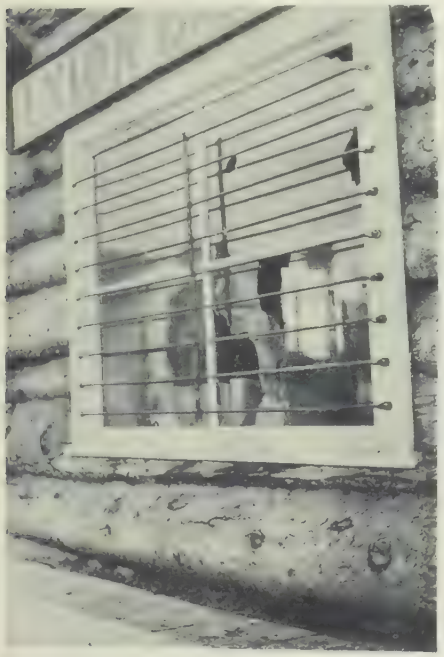
However local residents arose to the occasion and in a blazing volley of gunfire one of the bandits was killed and two wounded. We would appreciate more information on this roaring chapter of Interior history. Can any of our readers be of assistance?



The bullet smashed front window of the bank.

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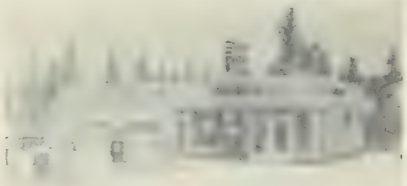

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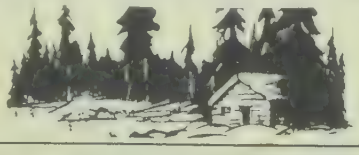

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The famous four bridges at Telkwa. Three of them are across the Telkwa River and the one in the left foreground is across the Bulkley. Photo courtesy Bussinger Below shows the village of Smithers as it looked in June of 1913. The Babine mountains are in the background. The lower photo shows a survey party at work in the Bulkley Valley sometime prior to 1914.

The top photo is believed to show the first school in the Bulkley Valley and the lower the first store in the Valley Below shows the first railway station to be built at Smithers, now the largest community in the Bulkley

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In the absence of movies, cars, and similar diversions, pioneers of Interior communities had to make their own entertainment. The Boston Bloomer girls ball team was an example. Here they posed with the Smithers ball team in 1915. Among the "girls" are some who are now the Interior's very successful businessmen, including Wiggs O'Neill. Below--Smither's first baseball team in 1915.

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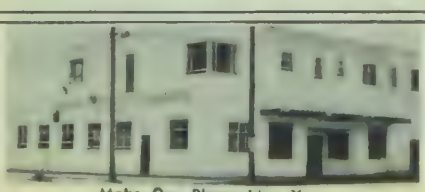

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The Indian settlement of Kitseucla, generally credited with being the oldest established village in the upper Skeena valley.
Wrathall photo

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Over the years transportation methods through Central B.C. have varied from sternwheelers to mule trains and from dog teams to back packing. A somewhat unusual conveyance was this Model T placed into service by the C.N.R. to augment its transportation facilities.

For many years road conditions along Highway 16 weren't exactly the best, but the entire route is now under reconstruction with much of the distance already paved. The entire 480 miles from Prince George to Prince Rupert is scheduled for completion by 1960

Pioneer log cabin built by William Cox in 1904 ten miles east of Telkwa.
N. R. Campbell photo

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Above--Among communities which sprouted as a result of railway speculation was Aldermere near Telkwa. Like most of them it faded when the boom ended about 1914. Telkwa, shown below in 1912, survived and today is a prosperous little village in the rich farming community of the Bulkley.

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The Indian settlement of Fort Fraser on the Nechako river as it looked in 1905. This post was established by Fraser in 1807 and is named after him. Below is a memorial to Kwah, a chief of the Carrier Indians when Fraser first explored the Interior at what is now Fort St. James. He was a friend of the fur traders, but he was firm in his dealings with them and frequently opposed the Company when he thought that his people were being imposed on.

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Alaska Highway

The main street of Fort Babine on Babine Lake. Since the photo was taken the houses have mostly been replaced.

The stained glass windows and three life sized plaster statues of the Saints as well as all interior furnishings of the church below came into the Babine Lake country over the old Hazelton trail by packhorse.

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Above--Vanderhoof's main street as it looked about 30 years ago.
Opposite--The first store to appear in Vanderhoof. The village is the center of a rich agricultural district and boasts the only elevator in the Interior. It is also the center of an excellent fishing area.
Below--Float planes played a large part in developing the Interior and this was one of the first planes through in 1928.

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The photos above were taken in Burns Lake in 1915. The tents were quickly replaced by more permanent buildings and the combination of one dog and one man power gave way to horses and then cars. Below is the first hospital.

A group of old timers of the Burns Lake district and, below, the Ogilvie Fords first log cabin on Francois lake.

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The above series of photos were found in an envelope with the name 'Turner' H.B.C. on the back. Although they are faded detail is still fairly clear. They presumably were taken at Fort St. James and to all appearances show the arrival of a supply train. The man in the top hat was probably the factor. Note that a piper in full dress is present in the beach scene. Note also the colorful regalia of the packers, the teepees outside the Fort gate, and the Indians who seem to be chiefs of some importance. Can any of our readers supply further information on these photos?

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A packtrain ready to leave Fort St. James for Fort McLeod in 1914. Fort St. James was built by Simon Fraser in 1806 and for many years was the administrative center for an area covering most of what is now the B.C. mainland.
George Ogston of Vanderhoof was a clerk at the post in 1906 and recalls that access was slightly more complicated than is the case today. From Hazelton supplies were brought by pack horse 110 miles to Babine Lake, ferried 100 miles down the lake by rowboat, loaded onto wagons for a nine mile portage to Stuart lake, and rowed 45 miles down the lake to the fort.

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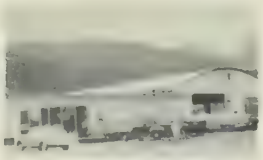

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South Fort George at its peak in 1914. The sternwheelers in the center, foreground, plied some 450 miles of the Fraser river between Tete Jaune Cache near the Alberta boundary to Soda Creek in the north Cariboo.

Central Ave. in South Fort George at its peak. Completion of the G.T.P. railway from the east to Prince Ruert sounded the death knell of both the sternwheelers and South and Fort George.

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During the flamboyant railway era prior to 1914, the Central Interior experienced the gaudy age of town building. Sub-divisions were carved from the wilderness, towns sprang up everwhere, and none knew which would die and which would prosper. For instance when Prince George was only the site of an Indian reservations its two sister communities of South Fort and Fort George were the largest settlements in the Interior with populations of about 1,500 each. Yet both waned and Prince George survived, in fact for the past five years it has been Canada's fastest growing city.

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During railway construction prior to World War I, scows like this drifted over 300 miles down the Fraser river from Tete Jaune Cache to Fort George. It was exceedingly dangerous work and 10 per cent of all barges were wrecked. In one Canyon alone during the summer 25 barge men were drowned.

A sawmill in Fort George in 1910. This is believed to be the first mill in the district, the beginning of an industry which has grown to the extent that Prince George is now the greatest White Spruce shipping center in the world.

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A husband bringing his wife and family over 30 miles to South Fort George in 1914 to see a doctor.
The lower photo shows a survey crew on the upper Nechako river in October of 1910. Note that two of the boats are carved from Cottonwood trees. This type of boat was hand hewn from a single tree and is still in use by Interior Indians.
Top photo courtesy M. Shier

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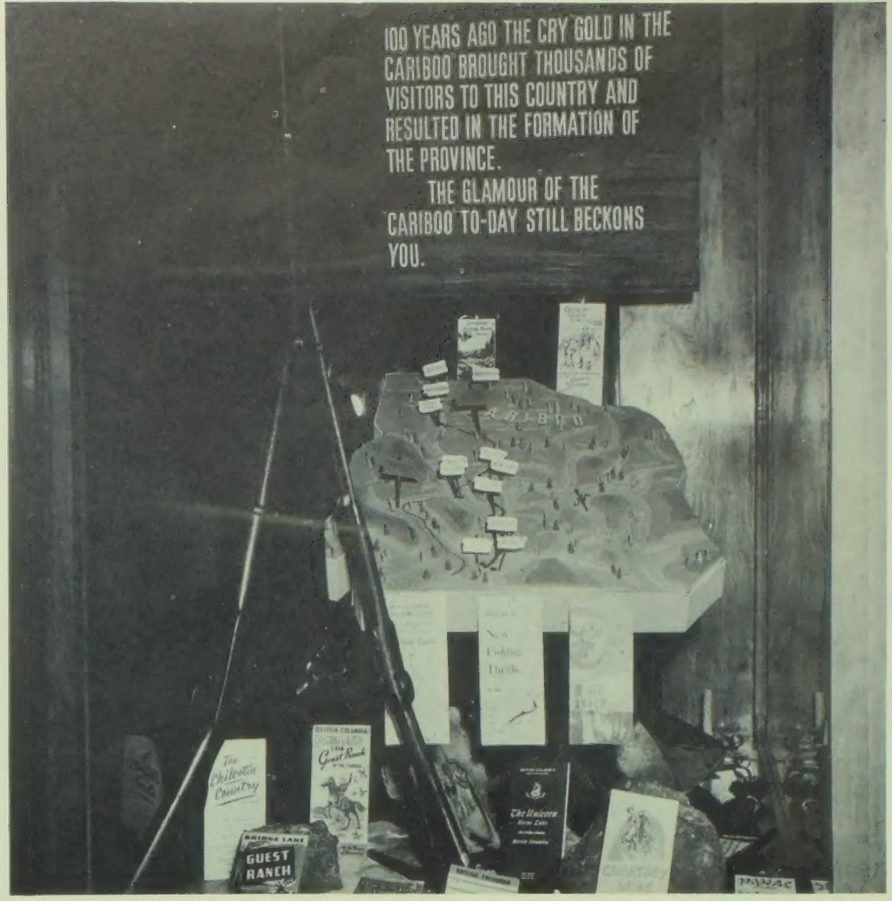
Backstage the Digest

Opposite

The display in the lobby of the Devonshire hotel in Vancouver. All those with resorts in the Cariboo will be interested to know that the managing director of the hotel, W. Fred Evans, welcomes all publicity material and will prominently display it in the lobby. There is no charge for this service and all resorts are invited to send material.

The lower photos show the reproduction of the "Wolf" totem being unloaded at the Prince Rupert dock and Mr. Charles Dudoward, who carved the totem . He is among the last of the great totem carvers. More data on the theme of these photos is contained on Pages 4 and 5 of this issue.



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